

## Exploring Women's Level of Participation in Grassroots Politics in the Akan Constituency of Ghana

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### Abstract

The study was aimed at exploring women's level of participation in grassroots politics in the Akan constituency of the Volta Region of Ghana. A concurrent triangulation mixed method research design was undertaken using the Liberal Feminist theory as the theoretical focus of the study. A selected sample size of two hundred (200) respondents was employed for the study. This included women who were 18 years and above. They were purposively and conveniently selected. The study employed interviews and questionnaires to gather data to assess the extent of women's participation in the grassroots level politics. Quantitative data were analysed using frequency, percentages, mean, standard deviation, whilst qualitative data were analysed systematically and logically into themes. The responses of the open-ended questions were grouped according to themes in relation to common ideas expressed and general pattern were sorted out of them. The findings revealed that poor participation of women existed at the grassroots politics in the Akan constituency. It was further revealed that the respondents were mostly motivated by intrinsic factors when they were willing to participate in grassroots politics. Findings based on the hypothesis also revealed that age and educational level were not differentiators when it came to level of participation in grassroots politics. The following recommendations were made based on these findings: Women's participation in grassroots politics should be encouraged to make governance more democratic and adult education should be encouraged for the womenfolk.

**Keywords:** Akan Constituency, Ghana, Grassroots Politics, Level of Participation, Women Politics

### Introduction

In the pre-colonial era, women played important roles in top decision making levels in African societies. Some were princesses, chiefs, land owners, occasional warriors, farmers and traders who were very influential in their societies. Baah, Owusu and Kokor (2005), indicates that African women have played important roles in top decision-making processes in their traditional areas before colonialism. Examples of some important African women leaders were the Ethiopian empress Menetewab (1720-1770), Mnkabayi the first Shaka princess in 1780, and Yaa Asantawa, the queenmother of Asante who mobilized men to fight the British in 1900 in the Gold Coast (now Ghana).

During the decades of colonial rule however, African women in many parts of the continent were increasingly characterized as limited in their economic activities, mobility, political interests and associations, and, indeed, character and mental capacity as colonial regulations circumscribed their movement and opportunities. According to Jean, Susan & Nakanyike (2002), A civilized African wife knew about tables and chairs, doilies and crockery, curtains and bedspreads, books and polite conversation. In order to be successful in the "modern" sector of any colonial urban area, an African man needed a wife to keep his home and children up to the "civilized" that is, Western standard of housekeeping and childrearing.

However, there is no dispute about the fact that, women's growing visibility, acceptance and participation in African governance during the post-colonial period was very remarkable. That is why Ghana is noted as one of the first African countries to introduce a quota system for women in 1960. In that year, "the CPP passed a law allowing for the nomination and election of ten women to the National Assembly" (Tamale, 1999:23). Upon the attainment of self-government in 1957, the party rewarded the hard work, resilience and general contribution by women to the independence struggle. On this note "an assessment of the CPP government's policies towards women has noted that it consciously encouraged the participation of women in politics and public life with the result that a few women held high political offices as members of parliament, deputy ministers and district commissioners, and that these were not acts of tokenism, but a recognition of their abilities" (Tsikata cited in Allah-Mensah, 2005:14).

There has been expansion of global women's movements, which has put pressure on governments to accept and accommodate women's participation in democratic governance. Some of these organizations range from the United Nations and the World Bank to donor Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and foundations like Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA), and the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), which often make recipients' commitment to gender transformation and women's empowerment a prerequisite for funding. They also involve the global, continental and regional events and movements that have pressured governments to accommodate women's participation in

governance and policy-making.

According to Karam (2010), the Beijing Platform for Action for instance, set a target for women representation in all decision-making positions at all levels and it included a detailed set of recommendations to all sectors of the global communities to enhance women's political participation and decision-making. The conference further called for at least 30 percent representation of women in the processes of decision making. In fact, some countries in the world have made efforts to implement this resolution even though some have failed to reach the target. For instance, in Ghana despite efforts by stakeholders, women's representation and participation continues to be low with only 8 % and 10% represented in the national parliament and district assemblies respectively (Ghana Electoral Commission Report, 2010). This calls for the triggering reasons for this research.

In 2006, a survey carried out by WiLDAF on the implementation of the Solemn Declaration in 11 West African countries, pointed to the fact that despite efforts to promote women's rights, low representation of women in political life and decision making was still a concern. Further, The Roundtable Conference of the Pathways to Women's Empowerment (2009) revealed that women face significant negative cultural practices and religious exploitation in many countries. These women perceive their place as being in the home and even those who are capable lack the confidence to come out boldly to contest for political office. On the other hand, men are perceived as superior and more eligible for higher political offices.

In Ghana, women face similar experiences in their quest to enter into the political arena just as their counterparts elsewhere in the world. For example WiLDAF findings in 2008 indicate that there is no discriminatory law against women in politics, but there are traditional and religious practices which hinder women's abilities to lead successful campaigns alongside male counterparts for political positions. Corroborating this, the Ghana Statistical Services, in their Population Data Analysis Reports for 2005 stated, male-dominance is a key aspect of the Ghanaian social system and the woman's role and status are recognizably inferior to those of the man in almost all aspects of social, political and economic life. The analysis report revealed that Custom, law and even religion have been used to rationalize and perpetuate these differential roles to the extent that women themselves seem to have accepted and internalized them.

It should be noted, however, that all these findings notwithstanding, efforts have been made by the various governments to encourage women to participate in politics. Women participation has seen significant improvement over the previous dispensations in Ghana. At the political level, there is no dispute about the fact that, the number of women is seeing a steady growth from the local government level in particular especially in the number of contestants and actual elected women (Allah-Mensah, 2005). This, however, is insignificant as compared to the number of men holding various positions at the local, regional and national levels. At the political party level, the National Democratic Congress (NDC), the New Patriotic Party (NPP), the People's National Convention (PNC), the Convention People's Party (CPP) except for the Great Consolidated People's Party (GCPP), made claims in their manifestoes to their commitment to gender issues in general and women's concerns in particular, it is not very evident even in their party leadership structure and in their own internal organization (Allah-Mensah, 2005). As a result of these challenges some political parties in Ghana waived their filling fees for women to be able to participate in the 2012 general elections. The CPP and PNC even appointed women as their running-mates to their presidential candidates. Despite all these, the women could not get elected.

The situation is more serious at the grassroots level where unit committees, district and metropolitan assemblies form the basis for the decentralization process. Men still dominate as assemblymen and government appointees to the disadvantage of women. For example national statistics from The Electoral Commission indicate that, in the 2002 district level elections, out of 7,700 assembly members of 110 district assemblies only five percent were women. The number rose to 10 per cent in 2006 and a little above 14 per cent in 2014.

It is however worth noting that, a range of steps have been taken by the country to increase women political participation at all levels by creating ministerial portfolios and mainstreaming gender issues all in a bid to change the perception about women and also give the needed support to issues that hinder the development of women. Despite all these efforts, it appears women still face some challenges in participating in politics especially at the grassroots levels.

A study by The Gender Studies and Human Rights Documentation Centre, in partnership with Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF), the International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA Ghana), and The Hunger Project Ghana, between April 2010 and March 2013, indicates that Ghana has often been promoted as an exemplary country when it comes to implementing and consolidating democracy, but it's rate of women's participation both in policy making and government representation is shockingly low. It is against this setting that this study will seek to answer the questions: (1) To what extent do women participate in grassroots level politics in the Akan constituency? and (2) What factors are motivating

women to participate in grassroots politics in the Akan constituency? It was also guided by this hypothesis - Do women in the Akan Constituency participation's in grassroots politics differ according to some of their demographic characteristics (age and educational level)? The number of constituencies in the Volta region is twenty-six. However the study was limited to only the Akan constituency which is located in the northern part of the region. The research was conducted at Kajebi and Papase in the constituency and the study was limited to only women who were eighteen years and above.

### **Literature Review**

Theories are reconstructions of the facts, and the criterion of a good theory is an understanding of the meaning and intentions rather than deductive explanation (Myers, 2008). In social science meanings are what constitute facts, for data consist of documents, intentional behaviour (action), social rules, culture, etc., and these are inseparable from their meanings for agents. The hermeneutic circle - the 'logic' of interpretation is irreducibly circular: parts cannot be understood without the whole, data and concepts cannot be understood without theory and context (Myers, 2008).

The theoretical framework which was adopted to underpin the research is the liberal feminist theory because it reveals the nature of inequality, gender politics, power relations and sexuality and how women empowerment can propel them from lower level of society to the top. Popular liberal feminists such as Betty Friedan, Hillary Clinton, Gloria Steinem, Rebecca Walker, Naomi Wolf, Martha Nussbaum and Eleanor Roosevelt believe that equality in pay, job opportunities, political structure, social security and education for women needs to be guaranteed for all women for them to reach their full potential. Liberal feminists in general believe that female subordination is rooted in a set of customary and legal constraints that block women's entrance to and success in the so-called public world and they work hard to emphasize the equality of men and women through political and legal reform (Tony, 1989).

This theory was relevant in this study, because a cursory look indicate that most women do not actively take part in politics because they are impeded by socio cultural factors at the grassroots level. These are the challenges liberal feminist attempt to tackle by creating and supporting acts of legislation that remove the barriers that prevent women from having equal opportunities with men in society. Liberal feminists believe that individuals should be free to develop their own talents and pursue their own interests irrespective of their gender, cultural or religious background. They also demand that everyone receive equal consideration without discrimination on the basis of sex, as enshrined in Article 1 and 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that states that "all human beings are born equal in dignity and rights without distinction of any kind such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion or status" (Basic Facts About United Nations, 1995: 189).

Liberal feminists believe that both sexes should have equal rights under the law and that until conditions of equality exist, no one can easily assess the natural differences between women and men. What is natural to the two sexes can only be found out by allowing both men and women develop and use their faculties freely. Liberal feminist theory is relevant in this study because, the researchers believe that individuals should be free to develop their own talents and pursue their own interests irrespective of their gender, cultural or religious background. It should be noted that, women as part of the human race need to realize the highest level of development as individuals and group but that can only be achieved if the views of liberal feminists are taken into consideration because liberal feminists do not seek to reorganize society but they do seek to expand the rights and opportunities of women to the same level enjoyed by their male counterparts.

Various scholars have different perspectives on what the concepts of politics and political participation are and as such have defined it differently. Dahl as cited in Bluwey (2011:11) defines politics as "any stable pattern of human relationships that involves power and influence". To him politics exists wherever there is "persistent pattern of relationships and involves, to a significant extent, power, rule or authority." This means that politics is about policy and it encompasses the various processes through which government responds to pressures from various societies and how benefits, rewards and penalties are allocated. This implies political activity is concerned with making decisions about what concerns the state and how resources or values are to be distributed in order not to disadvantage others.

Bluwey (2011) further observed that the decisions and rules made by public officials affect the life of every citizen. Similarly, members of civic organisations, religious groups, labour and student unions and various private organisations are bound by the rules and regulations made by their officials. People engage in various forms of activity at the appropriate levels to ensure that those decisions and rules satisfy their needs. These activities, according to Bluwey, regardless of where they are undertaken, are politics and they all have certain basic features in common. They take place within an organized grouping of individuals; these activities are designed to pursue objectives and to obtain for the participants certain benefits or resources and those engaging in such activities try to attain their goals by employing tactics and deploying assets which are expected to maximize their influence and power potential. This implies that politics is an activity of the people within a geographical

area. It is imperative to note that the issue of participation in such an important activity as politics cannot be overlooked. Participation makes politics meaningful to society and without it the main objective of politics which is the establishment of power, allocation and distribution of public goods will be in a state of confusion.

Allah-Mensah (2003) noted that political participation involves partaking in the formulation, passage and implementation of public policies with more emphasis on representative democracy. Participation in politics refers to those voluntary activities by which members of society share in the selection of rulers either directly or indirectly. These activities include enrollment in a political party, discussion, debating, canvassing for votes, registering as voters, voting, seeking information, lobbying for position and interacting with the leadership of the country (Yartey, 2012). Members of society, both men and women need to take part in political activities of their country to be able to identify the needs of each segment of the society in order to address them and also disregard the temptation of discrimination in the area of sex, religion or tribe. Many barriers and discriminatory practices against women hinder their ability to actively participate in all processes of decision making that affect their lives (Abantu, 2010). Women are the major social group that must be critically examined in any attempt to understand politics in Ghana. Women constitute about 51% of Ghana's population which means that they constitute the majority of the total population, produce about 70% of the agricultural output, and take primary responsibility for household chores (NCWD, 1994).

It is therefore incumbent on women to participate effectively in activities such as enrollment in a political party, registering as voters, discussing political issues, debating, canvassing for votes, voting, seeking information, lobbying for position and interacting with the leadership at the polling stations, unit committee, area council, the district which is the grassroots as well as the national level.

A thorough assessment reveals that the 1992 constitution of Ghana is one of the most gender sensitive constitutions in the world. The constitution expressly guarantees equal rights and responsibilities under the law, which is evident in many sections of the document. For instance, under the National Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy, there are provisions that are gender sensitive. Firstly, Article 35(5) states that "The state shall actively promote the integration of the peoples of Ghana and prohibit discrimination and prejudice on the ground of place of origin, circumstances of birth, ethnic origin, gender or religion, creed or other beliefs." Secondly, Article 35(6b) also asserts that "The state shall take appropriate measures to achieve reasonable regional and gender balance in the recruitment and appointment of public offices." Article 36(6) gives credence showing that, the state shall afford equality of economic opportunity to all citizens; and, in particular, the state shall take all necessary steps so as to ensure full integration of women into the mainstream of the economic development of Ghana.

These articles are only a sample of the feminist provisions included in the constitution and therefore provide a solid foundation for Ghanaian women and civil society organisations to challenge all forms of gender discrimination and oppression. For the purpose of grassroots politics, Asibuo (1991) indicates that several advantages have been claimed for transferring decision making authority and management responsibilities from central governments to lower levels of administration in developing countries.

The current policy of decentralization, as enshrined in the Local Government Act of 1988 (PNDC Law 207) has paved way for local government in Ghana. Chapter 20 of the Fourth Republican Constitution of Ghana, Act. 240 clause (1) indicates that "Ghana shall have a system of local government and administration which shall, as far as practicable, be decentralized. The clause (2d) and (2e) also stated that "The system of decentralized local government shall have the following features: (2d) as far as practicable, persons in the service of local government shall be subject to the effective control of local authorities; and (2e) to ensure the accountability of local government authorities, people in particular local government areas shall, as far as practicable, be afforded the opportunity to participate effectively in their governance." These provisions in Ghana's decentralization documents gives hope to the masses at the grassroots level (majority of whom are women) to have power to contribute to decisions made in government.

### **Methodology**

This study employed the concurrent triangulation mixed method research design. The design was used to explore and explain factors determining the participation level of grassroots politics and the differences that may exist in participations based on some demographic characteristics. In attempt to confirm, cross-validate, or corroborate findings within a single study, Greene, Caracelli and Graham (1989:259) stated that, a triangulation mixed methods design works best when the "status of the different methods - that is, their relative weight and influence is equal and when the quantitative and qualitative study components are implemented independently and simultaneously." The principle aim of this approach is "to obtain different but complementary data on the same topic" (Morse, 1991:122) and is used when seeking to develop qualitative results and

quantitative data. This is true of the current study. The researchers wanted to explore factors determining the participation of women in grassroots politics and the factors motivating them.

Akan Constituency is in the Kadjebe District located in the northern part of the Volta Region of Ghana. It is made up of 58 communities with 36 electoral areas with an estimated population of 59,303. This is based on the 2010 Population Census of Ghana. Currently, females constitute about 49.5% of the population of the constituency and the other 50.5% are males. Most of the females are house wives, petty traders and peasant farmers. Based on this information, it is evident that the need to target women in the development programme of the constituency can therefore not be overemphasized. The major economic activity in the area is farming.

Due to the size of the constituency the research focused on the accessible population which covered an approximated number of 21,000 (2010 Population Census Report) women who are between the ages of eighteen and fifty years and have been in Papase and Kadjebe in the Akan constituency for more than four years and have been involved in some political activities. The sample size was made up of a small group of people chosen from the accessible population because all members of the study areas could not be studied. Because of this, a sample size of two hundred (200) respondents was selected for the study. All two hundred respondents were women from the Akan Constituency. The purposive and convenience sampling procedures were employed in selecting the respondents. Akan Constituency was purposively selected because no woman has been elected to parliament since the inception of the fourth republic and unlike many other constituencies a limited number of women have been elected to be assembly members within the same period. In 2012 for example out of the 53 members of the assembly only 9 were women. Currently the number has further reduced to 8. Purposive sampling technique was used to identify the women. Convenience sampling was used to identify and select the two hundred participants for the study. Convenience sampling technique is often based on interview and questionnaire of homogeneous respondents who converge at a particular point (Cohen & Manion, 1994).

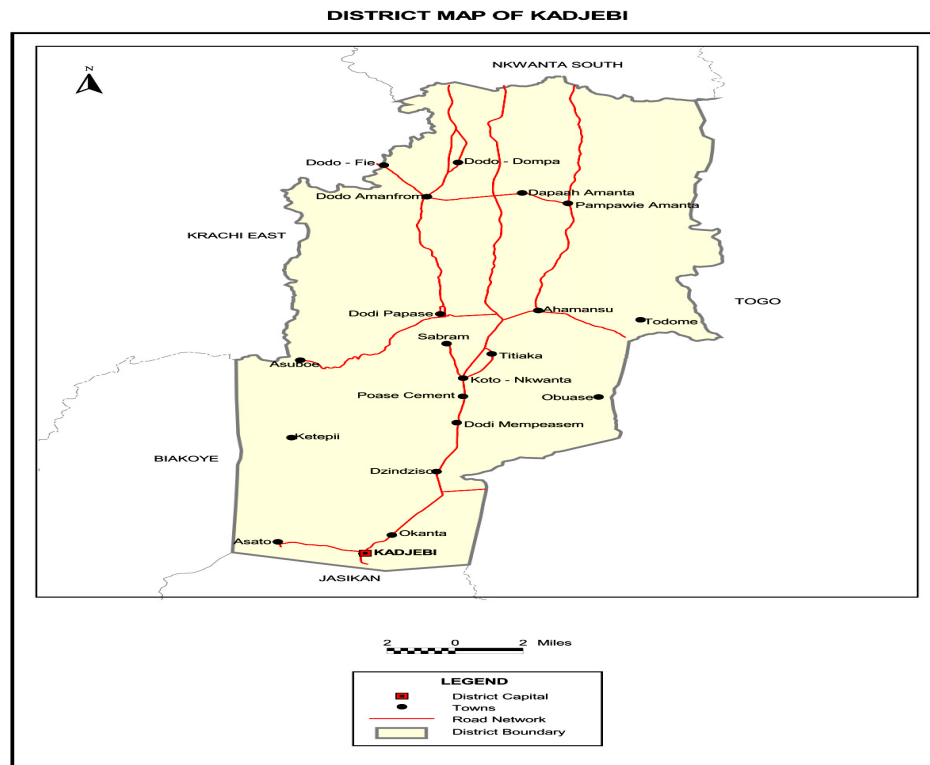
Interview guide and questionnaire (structured) were the main tools used in gathering the data for the study. Quantitative data were analysed using frequency, percentages, mean, and standard deviation whilst qualitative data were analysed systematically and logically into themes. The responses of the open-ended questions were grouped according to themes in relation to common ideas expressed and general patterns were sorted out of them. Ethically, respondents' privacy was duly respected and they were assured of confidentiality of any information that they did not want in the public domain. Pseudonyms were employed to conceal the real identity of respondents. Arrangements were made with the respondents as to what time and dates were appropriate and convenient for them to be interviewed. Females who were ready to share their experiences were involved in this study.

### **Findings and Discussion**

This section incorporates the results and discussions of the demographic characteristics and the finding of answers to the extent of women participation in grassroots level politics in the Akan constituency, and the factors motivating women to participate in grassroots politics in the Akan constituency. The demographic characteristics of respondents which were explored are: age; educational level; occupation; marital status; number of children; and the political description of the respondents.

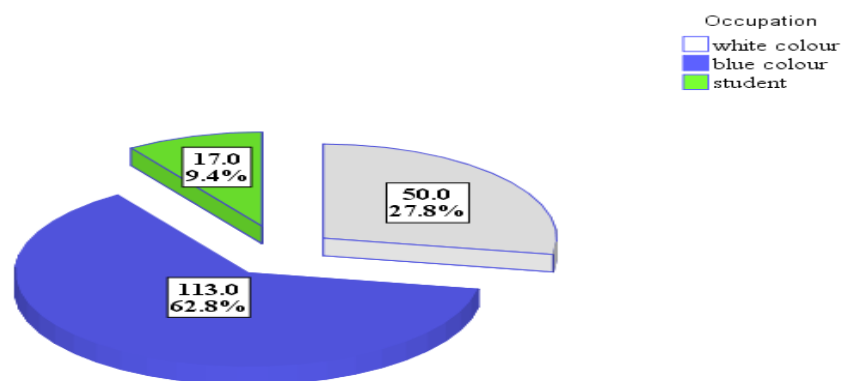
The analysis of the age characteristics of the respondents in this study revealed that out of the 180 respondents who participated in the study, 21 (11.7%) were within the 18 - 20 age group. The 21 - 30 group was 45 representing 25.0%, the 31 - 40 age group constituted 57 (31.7%), the 41 - 50 age group was 38 representing 21.1%, whilst 51 - 60 year group was made up of 19 (10.6%). The results as presented on the age distribution of the respondents indicate that the respondents were largely within the youthful age group.

When it came to the women's educational level, those who had no formal education constituted 14.0 (7.8%), those who had completed basic education only constituted 16.1% ( $n = 29$ ), those who had completed second cycle only were 65 (36.1%), and finally, those who had gone through tertiary form of tertiary education were also 72 (40%). This indicates that, most of the women who took part in the study were higher education certificate holders.



**Figure 1 Map of Research Area (Kadjebi District)**  
Source: Ghana Statistical Service (2015)

The occupation of the respondents was obtained and the findings have been analyzed and the results presented in Figure 2.



**Figure 2: Distribution of respondents' Occupation**

The occupations of the sampled respondents were segmented into two main streams: white and blue collar jobs. According to Schröder, Haupt, and Pieper (2014), a white-collar worker is a person who performs professional, managerial, or administrative work. Regarding the participants' occupation, majority of the women ( $n = 113$ , 62.8%) indicated that they were blue collar job workers, while some revealed that they were white collar job workers (50 representing 27.8%) and finally 9.4% ( $n = 17$ ) indicated that they were students. The results on the



occupational distribution of the women participants indicates that majority of them were workers.

The marital status of the respondents analysed indicates that 78 (43.3%) out of the total sampled respondents were single, while 56 (43.0%) were married, 24 (13.3%) indicated that they were divorced and finally 12.2% ( $n = 22$ ) revealed that they were widows. The result indicates that most of the respondents were not married and therefore it may imply that family burden and pressure which might result in increased stress might be minimal. Besides, they will get adequate time to be involved in politics if they wish to do so.

The outcome of whether or not women have interest in politics in the Akan Constituency, out of the 180 sampled indicate that, 79 (43.9%) were interested in politics, whilst 101(56.1%) were not interested in politics. It is observed that majority of the women respondents ( $n = 101$ , 56.1%) indicated that they were not interested in politics in general.

To augment the need for the inclusion of the demographic characteristics of respondents, a hypothesis which is - *Do women in the Akan Constituency participation's in grassroots politics differ according to some of their demographic characteristics (age and educational level)?* - was tested. When the background characteristics of women in Akan constituency were examined, their age and educational level were found not to be differentiating their participation in grassroots politics. Specifically, the women within the 18 - 20 years age group had the highest mean rating ( $M = 31.86$ ,  $SD = 9.7$ ), followed by the 51 - 60 years age group ( $M = 31.63$ ,  $SD = 9.3$ ) and then 21 - 30 years age group ( $M = 29.96$ ,  $SD = 7.6$ ), 41 - 50 year age group ( $M = 29.45$ ,  $SD = 8.2$ ) and finally 31 - 40 year age group was rated last ( $M = 28.30$ ,  $SD = 7.4$ ). However these identified differences that existed among the various age groups were not statistically significant and therefore it can be concluded that most of the women who participated in the study revealed that their low participation in grassroots politics was not hindered by their age range. Again, when the educational levels of the participants were examined against the grassroots participation of the women, it was noted that educational level was also not a differentiator of the respondents. In relation to the educational level of the respondents, women who were only basic education leavers recorded the highest participation level ( $M = 30.38$ ,  $SD = 6.8$ ), which was followed by respondents who were tertiary leavers ( $M = 30.19$ ,  $SD = 8.4$ ), secondary school education leavers' participation in grassroots politics also attracted a mean rating of 29.29, and standard deviation of 8.4, and finally the participation of women who do not have any formal education attracted a mean rating of 27.93 and a standard deviation of 8.9. These identified differences that existed among the educational level of the participants were not statistically significant. These findings seem to be consistent with the related literature about the effect of certain background characteristics on women's participation in grassroots politics (Wayne & Youngs, 2003). For example Ofei-Aboagye, (2000) in a similar study found that age and educational level and other background characteristics were not a differentiator when it came to participation of women in grassroots politics in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.

The purpose of the first part of this section is to help answer the question - *To what extent do women participate in grassroots politics in the Akan Constituency?* In exploring the extent to which women in the Akan Constituency participate in grassroots politics, participants were asked to rate some suggested indicators on their participation and other women's participation in grassroots politics in the constituency. Table 1 reveals information about women's participation in grassroots politics in the Akan Constituency.

**Table 1: Level of participation of women in grassroots politics in the Akan Constituency**

No.	Statement	SD (%)	D (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	M( SD)
1	I listen regularly to political talk shows on various media platforms	19(10.6)	62(34.4)	72(40.0)	27(15.0)	<b>2.6(0.7)</b>
2	I vote regularly on political issues in my community	35(19.4)	82(45.6)	45(25.0)	18(10.0)	<b>2.3(0.9)</b>
3	I like to talk about local politics as they are being undertaken in my constituency	42(23.3)	85(47.2)	34(18.9)	19(10.6)	<b>2.2(0.9)</b>
4	I attend town hall or community meetings on political issues in my constituency	57(31.7)	87(48.3)	25(13.9)	11(6.1)	<b>1.9(0.8)</b>
5	I have attended a political rally or campaign in my community before	63(35.0)	67(37.2)	33(18.3)	17(9.4)	<b>2.0(1.0)</b>
6	I have contacted an assembly man, District Chief Executive (DCE), MP, or a political authority about an issue that was of importance to me and my community before	56(31.1)	75(41.7)	31(17.2)	18(10.0)	<b>2.1(0.9)</b>
7	I am a member of a political group or party in my community	57(31.7)	81(45.0)	22(12.2)	20(11.1)	<b>2.0(0.9)</b>
8	I am an active member in a political group or party in my community.	61(33.9)	82(45.6)	24(13.3)	13(7.2)	<b>1.9(0.9)</b>
9	I have a leadership role in a political party in my community	76(42.2)	80(44.4)	18(10.0)	6(3.3)	<b>1.7(0.8)</b>
10	I volunteer for political campaigns or rallies in my community	73(40.6)	77(42.8)	19(10.6)	11(6.1)	<b>1.8(0.9)</b>
11	I have led a rally and given a political speech in my community before	76(42.2)	80(44.4)	15(8.3)	9(5.0)	<b>1.8(0.8)</b>
12	My job facilitates my active involvement in grassroots politics in my constituency	69(38.3)	89(49.4)	11(6.1)	11(6.1)	<b>1.8(0.8)</b>
13	I have contested for a political position in my community before	85(47.2)	74(41.1)	11(6.1)	10(5.6)	<b>1.7(0.8)</b>
14	I currently hold a political position in my community	84(46.7)	76(42.2)	13(7.2)	7(3.9)	<b>1.7(0.8)</b>
15	I take active part in all political activities such as civic education, promoting women participation among other in my constituency	50(27.8)	64(35.6)	46(25.6)	20(11.1)	<b>2.2(1.0)</b>

**Source: Field Data, Questionnaire (May, 2016).** Key: N = Serial Number, SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree (%) = Percentage, M = Mean, and SD = Std. Deviation

According to the Table 1, the mean scores obtained for most of the statements reveal that majority of the women who took part in the study did not actively participate in grassroots politics in the constituency. Table 1 reveals that a little more than one-half of the respondents, thus 99 representing 50.5%, indicated that they listened regularly to political talk shows on various media platforms in the constituency. This item's mean score was (*M*) 2.6, with a standard deviation of (*SD*) 0.7. As indicated by item 1 on Table 1. The mean score item recorded for the first indicator shows that the participants' involvement in listening to political programmes through various media platform was a bit high.

It is however, imperative to note that the rest of the items recorded low mean scores (between 2.3 and 1.7) and this was as a result the low frequencies recorded by the various items. This indicates that majority of the respondents' participation in the indicator grassroots political activities were low. For example, 117 respondents (65%) of the women who took part in the study indicated that they do not vote regularly on political issues in their community. Most of them disagreed/strongly disagreed to the statement. The item's mean value recorded was low (*M* = 2.3, *SD* = 0.9). Again from Table 1 a significant numbers of the respondents (127 participants



representing 70.5%) revealed that they do not like talking about local politics in their constituency. The mean value for this statement was,  $M = 2.2$ , and  $SD = 0.9$ .

Furthermore, more than three-fourth of the participants (80% disagreeing/strongly disagreeing) indicated that they do not attend town hall or community meetings on political issues in their constituency. The mean was 1.9 and the standard deviation was 0.8. Additionally, majority of the respondents indicated that they have not attended any political rally or campaign in the community before (72.2% disagreeing/strongly disagreeing). Similarly, item number 6 on the table also attracted a mean value of 2.1 which indicates that majority of the respondents (131 representing 72.8%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that they have either contacted an assembly man, DCE, MP, or a political authority about an issue that was of importance to them and their community.

Results in the Table 1 further indicate that 141(76.7%) of the women who participated in the study opined that they were not members of any political group or party in their community, while 143 representing 79.5% indicated that they were not active members of any political group or party in the constituency. Subsequently, 86.6% representing 156 of the participants revealed that they do not have any leadership role in any political party in the constituency. 'Volunteering for political campaigns or rallies in my community' was item number 10 and it attracted 150 signifying 83.4% of the women indicating their level of disagreement. An over whelming majority of the participants, thus 156 representing 86.6%, stated that they had not led a rally and given a political speech in their constituency before. The participants were also asked to indicate whether or not they had a job which facilitated their involvement in grassroots politics in their constituency and 159 representing 88.3% of them asserted that they did not have a job which facilitated their active involvement in grassroots politics.

The participants were also asked to indicate whether they had contested for a political position in their constituency before and 159 signifying 88.3% disagreed/strongly disagreed with the statement indicating that they had not contested for any leadership position before in the constituency. 'I currently hold a political position in my community' was a follow up question to the item which sought to find out whether the participants have contested for political position previously and far more than three-quarters of the respondents, that is 160 representing 88.9%, indicated that they were not holding any political position in their constituency as at the time of the research study. Finally, when the participants were asked whether they take active part in political activities such as civic education, promoting women participation among others in the constituency, they answered in the negative. Thus 114 of the respondents representing 63.4% indicated that they disagree with the statement. Initial inferences drawn from the quantitative data and results presented in relation to research question one indicate that the participants level of participation in grassroots politics in the Akan constituency is low and not encouraging. In order to confirm or refute this stands, an interview guide was administered to the respondents. Results from the interview section are presented as follows.

Qualitatively, this portion sought to find out, through interviewing of the participant's interest and participation in the grassroots politics and whether they belonged to any political association. It also explored the political activities of respondents and how they sought information on politics. It has been argued that participation by women in politics is not only a means to the realization of broad agenda of good governance but also emphasizes the view that without their involvement, progress in other areas of development is likely to be halted. Women's exclusion from active politics deprives government of half of its citizen's talents and contributions (Allah Mensah, 2005). It is therefore important that more women participate actively in grassroots politics in the constituency so that they contribute in all the decisions that are taken which may also affect them.

As a follow up on the quantitative phase of the study, a number of the respondents were interviewed to gather qualitative data on the participation level of the participants in grassroots level. The qualitative data, similar to the quantitative data, also revealed that majority of the women did not actively participate in grassroots politics. The reasons attributed to participants' disinterest in politics include shyness, lack of education, poverty and male dominance in all aspects of Ghanaian politics. Answering questions on their interest in politics, most of the participants did not have interest in grassroots politics due to various reasons. The following excerpts are some

of the answers some of the participants gave to the items posed to them during the interview section which reflects the identified themes.

A 29 year old woman, Madam Akosua who is a teacher indicated that:

*“Even though I vote, I don’t like politics at all because I don’t want people to insult me. These days young people do not have any respect for elderly. They say bad things about you because you want to be in politics. They don’t care whether you have a husband and children. Some will even say women who are in politics sleep with men. If I don’t do politics will I die? What pains me is that some can’t even write their names. I don’t even listen or watch any political programme on television or radio.”*

Another woman, Agnes, a 31 year old who is unemployed also stated:

*“I don’t like politics because I don’t want to lie. Look at them. If something is black they say it is red. They are becoming rich every day and look at us. We are poor. As for politics I will never go into it because politicians are corrupt. If you don’t have money you can’t do politics. Even if you put in more money into it you will be tempted to recoup the money you invested in it before you think of others. Because of this, I don’t even vote or do anything which talks about politics”. (6<sup>th</sup> September 2016).*

The responses from the women show that politics of insults, perceived corruption and society’s bad perception of women in politics make politics unattractive to some of them. Some of the participants attributed their non-participation in politics to their low level of education. The following extracts are further reasons advanced by the respondents for their level of interest.

Frimpongmaa, a 51 year old farmer had this to say:

*“Ei!!!! I did not go to school so what English am I going to speak? Even if I can speak small English, I will make mistakes and the people will tease me? Politics is for those who are educated. I am also a person who feels shy a lot and can’t speak in public. I don’t want to be above my husband because our Ghanaian culture states that men are the head of the family. If I go into politics, it will seem as if I am competing with my husband and society will talk”. (8<sup>th</sup> September 2016).*

It is important to point out that not all the women who participated in the study lacked interest in grassroots politics. For instance four of the participants who were interviewed indicated that they had interest in grassroots politics. They adduced the following reasons for their interest in politics. One participant, Afua aged 34 who is a women organizer in one of the political parties said:

*“I like politics so much. Because I don’t care what people will say about me. If you do something, people will talk about you, if you don’t do something people will talk about you. I have decided to do politics regardless of what people will say. I am even the constituency women organizer for my party and I enjoy doing the work. I vote regularly in every election, I attend party meeting regularly, I organize the women of my party to campaign for the party and organize training programme on tie and dye, and even liquid soap preparations for them. I also listen regularly to political talk shows on various media platforms.”*

Juliet a 30 year government appointee also said:

*“I like politics because it makes people famous and it makes me express my feelings about how women are being treated. It also gives me access to the big people in the constituency. I vote regularly, I meet the assembly member of my area regularly to discuss issues of concern of the community with him. I also attend political rallies and even call radio stations in Accra to contribute to political issues. Through politics the Member of Parliament has taken care of my daughter to the tertiary level so I think it is good to be in politics.”*

Other participants believe that regardless of what you do people will talk so they are in politics because they are bold. To them it gives them power, exposure and pleasure.

The participants were asked if they belong to any political association and occupy any position in that association. Six participants stated they were not interested in politics and declined. Four stated that they were active members of the women's wing of their parties and occupied various positions. Two were women organizers of two major political parties in the constituency and the other two were active members of their women's wings. According to them the political activities they normally participate in include attending political rallies, organizing meetings, teaching women how to vote properly and encouraging more women to participate in politics. The common political activity all the 10 women participate in was voting. All the ten women also stated that radio and television were their major sources of information on politics. These responses from the interviews indicate that women participation in grassroots level politics in the Akan constituency is low because to vote and listen to political talk show are not enough to bring these women to the lime light when it comes to grassroots politics and this needs to be addressed. These same results were arrived at during the quantitative analysis.

The findings in relation to research question one indicate that participation of most women in grassroots politics in the Akan constituency was low. It was observed in the study that the only grassroots political activity that most women took active part in was to listen to political talk shows regularly on various media platforms. As indicated by item 1 one Table 1 ,whereas regular voting on political issues, attending town hall meetings and political rallies, contacting a political authority, being an active member of a political party, taking up political leadership role, contesting for political position and taking active part in all political activities such as civic education, promoting women participation among other in the constituency were all found to have attracted low patronage in the Akan constituency by the women. Most of these findings on women in the Akan constituency are consistent with the results of similar studies conducted in various African countries and the world in general. For example, in the view of Barry (2005) a casual observation of the world's political stage shows that the participation of women remains insignificant in formal political structures and processes, where decisions regarding the use of societal resources generated by both men and women are made. In the authors' own words, "presently, women's representation in law making house around the world are less than 15 percent" (Barry, 2005:26). Again, a review, conducted by Zeleke (2005), of selected African countries' legislative representation shows that women have had less representation in African parliaments.

The assertion by Yartey (2012) that women in Ghana are yet to find their bearing in the decision making process of the nation was affirmed in this study. There is no denying the fact that democracy is appreciated all over the world because of the opportunity it provides for the participation of various interest groups in the management of societal affairs. It is reasonable to argue, therefore, that participation in decision making will be severely hindered when a good number of females are not elected or appointed into the local assemblies. Indeed, there is truly a large constituency of women out there who are largely unrepresented and, therefore, have no idea how governance is conducted even around them. This is unfair especially in jurisdictions where women are clearly in the majority. It is impermissible that some assemblies in Ghana have over a decade recorded only a single elected female member against too many males.

Allah-Mensah (2005) examines the participation and presence of women not only in politics specifically but also in public life in general due to their semeiotic relationship. This relationship will enable key stakeholders like political parties, government and its institutions and agencies and other civil society groups to know the reality on the ground and act appropriately to address the identified problems. Allah-Mensah concludes that, women in political and social lives are grossly under represented even if compared to the number of qualified women in the population. Furthermore, a significant number of those who are employed in the civil and public service occupy "low grade level" positions only. The study therefore makes a strong case for the increase of the number of women in public life in general and in executive positions in particular as supported by the liberal feminist theory.

The purpose of the second part of this section sought to help answer the question - *What factors are motivating women to participate in grassroots politics in the Akan Constituency*. Evidence as adduced by this research question indicates that majority of the participants did not actively participate in grassroots politics. In this wise, factors that are likely to motivate women in the Akan constituency to actively participate in grassroots politics were explored and investigated as part of this research question. The factors were organized to include motivation - intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The items on the questionnaire sought information on both extrinsic and intrinsic factors. Therefore the purpose of the second research question was to explore factors that were likely to motivate women in the Akan constituency to actively participate in grassroots politics. Descriptive statistics (frequency count, percentage, mean and standard deviation) was the analytical tool employed to analyze the quantitative data gathered on the research question. Considering the second research question, Table 2 reveals the participants' perception of the factors that were likely to motivate them to actively participate in grassroots politics.

**Table 2: Motivating factors promoting active participation of women in grassroots**

No.	Statement	SD (%)	D (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	M(SD)
1	One of the primary reasons why I will actively participate in politics will be that it would help facilitate my networks among other people in leadership position.	36(20.0)	60(33.3)	64(35.6)	20(11.1)	<b>2.4(0.9)</b>
2	Seeing my fellow women actively participating in politics may encourage me to get involve in grassroots politics in my community.	29(16.1)	83(46.1)	50(27.8)	18(10.0)	<b>2.3(0.9)</b>
3	Engaging in grassroots politics may help me learn the basics of exercising my civic right of engaging in election processes.	24(13.3)	53(29.4)	70(38.9)	33(18.3)	<b>2.6(0.9)</b>
4	People who influence my behaviour think that I should participate in grassroots politics in my constituency.	47(26.1)	57(31.7)	63(35.0)	13(7.2)	<b>2.2(0.9)</b>
5	I am motivated to participate in grassroots politics because it is my civic right and responsibility	31(17.2)	63(35.0)	62(34.4)	24(13.3)	<b>2.4(0.9)</b>
6	I will actively participate in politics because I am likely to secure a job with a political organization in my community	49(27.2)	76(42.2)	38(21.1)	17(9.4)	<b>2.1(0.9)</b>
7	I am encouraged to participate in grassroots politics because I will be provided with daily news update and current news events around the world	48(26.7)	60(33.3)	46(25.6)	26(14.4)	<b>2.3(1.0)</b>
8	I will like to be called an 'honourable member' in my community one of these days that is why I am motivated in participating in grassroots politics	37(20.6)	69(38.3)	46(25.6)	28(15.6)	<b>2.4(1.0)</b>
9	The recognition and prestige that comes with participating in local politics are the factors that drives me to actively take part in grassroots politics	37(20.6)	92(51.1)	36(20.0)	15(8.3)	<b>2.2(0.8)</b>
10	I will actively participate in politics because I am likely to secure an apartment from a political organization in my community	47(26.1)	71(39.4)	44(24.4)	18(10.0)	<b>2.2(0.9)</b>

**Source: Field Data, Questionnaire (May, 2016)** Key: N = Serial Number, SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree (%) = Percentage, M = Mean, and SD = Std. Deviation

Quantitative evidence as presented in Table 2 indicates that, about 96 of the participants (53.3%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that one of the primary motivation to actively participating in politics was that, it would help facilitate their networks among other people in leadership position. While only 84 participants representing 46.7% either agreed or strongly agreed that they are motivated by the fact that the actively participation in politics may help them to facilitate their networks among other people in leadership position. The item's mean score was 2.4 with a standard deviation of 0.9. Similarly, 112 respondents signifying 62.2% of the women in the Akan Constituency asserted that they disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that 'seeing my fellow women actively participating in politics may encourage me to get involve in grassroots politics in my community'. The second item recorded a mean score of  $M = 2.3$  and standard deviation of  $SD = 0.9$ . The next item on the extrinsic factors which may serve as a motivation to the participants was 'engaging in grassroots politics may help me learn the basics of exercising my civic right of engaging in election processes'. This item attracted 103 sampled women representing 57.2% in the Akan constituency agreeing or strongly agreeing to the statement, which meant that the statement was a motivator to the participants. Furthermore, majority of the women ( $n = 104$ , 57.8%) disagreed/strongly disagreed that people who influence their behaviour do not think they should participate in grassroots politics in the Akan constituency. However, the rest of the participants ( $n = 46$ , 42.2%) either agreed or strongly agreed that people who influence their behaviour think that they should participate in grassroots politics in their constituency. Significantly, the item mean score for statement 4 was 2.2 and a standard deviation of 0.9. The item 'I am motivated to participate in grassroots politics because it is my civic right and responsibility' attracted 86 sampled women (52.2%) either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing while the remaining 64 representing 47.8% indicated their level of agreement (agreeing/strongly agreeing) with the item. This items' mean score was 2.4 with a standard deviation of 0.9.

Again, other factors motivating women to participate in grassroots politics were considered. The mean score value recorded for each item on the questionnaire suggests that majority of the women were not motivated to actively participate in grassroots politics. For example, it is evident form the table that, majority of the participants (thus 125 representing 69.4% of the sample) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the item which suggested that they were going to be actively motivated to participate in grassroots politics because they were likely to secure a job with a political organization in their community. As such the item's mean score value was 2.1 and a standard deviation of 0.9. Additionally, exactly 60% ( $n = 108$ ) out of the 180 women who took part in the study asserted that they were not encouraged to participate in grassroots politics because they will be provided with daily news update and current news events around the world. The mean score value for that factor was 2.3 ( $SD = 1.0$ ). Similarly, most of the participants (58.9%) were of the view that being called an 'honourable member' in their community was a reason why they were motivated in participating in grassroots politics. Cumulatively in the same regard, 71.7% ( $n = 129$ ) out of the 180 participants disagreed or strongly disagreed that they were motivated to actively participate in grassroots politics by the recognition and prestige that comes with participating in local politics. Finally, the last but not the least item on the intrinsic motivation 'I will actively participate in politics because I am likely to secure an apartment from a political organization in my community' saw 180 participants representing 65.5% either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with it.

Qualitatively, results were also analysed on the research question - *What factors are motivating women to participate in grassroots politics in the Akan Constituency?* This portion is to supplement the outcome of the quantitative data. It hinges on how women were motivated to participate in politics. Motivation can be defined in a variety of ways, depending on who you ask. If someone on the street is asked, according to Young (2000:1) you may get a response like "it is what drives us" or "it is what makes us do the things we do." Motivation is the force within an individual that account for the level, direction, and persistence of effort expended at work". It can be deduced that motivation affects how hard or bad a person works and how productive they are. Extrinsic motivation is something outside the person that energizes his or her behaviour. For women to participate effectively in politics the participants indicated that extrinsic motivation factors such as money support from society, fame, power and popularity cannot be overlooked. Jemima 21 and unemployed stated:

*"I think that if women are appointed to occupy various positions in the district assembly it will be a motivating factor to others to participate in politics because these women will serve as role models in the community. Unfortunately this is not so because most of us don't participate*

*in political activities that will make us popular to attract government support. When women are given appointments it will give us some inner satisfaction which will motivate us to participate in politics". (18<sup>th</sup> September 2016).*

Another woman, Jamfua, aged 46 and a teacher said:

*"I am very popular in this town and would have loved to be an assembly woman but I don't have money to print my posters and also pay the people who will help me to campaign. All I can do is to go for a loan which will be a waste if I don't win. To add to that there is nobody to assist me if I even ask for help". (18<sup>th</sup> September 2016).*

Husbands who encourage their wives to participate in politics serve as an extrinsic motivating factor to other women. This also changes the perception of society about women who go into politics. Juliet made this observation:

*"As for me I am lucky because my husband has been encouraging me to go into politics. On our meeting days he helps me to do the cooking before I go. I think this is so because he is also a politician. This has helped me so much in my work as the organizer. I use my husband as an example and this has change the behaviour of most men in this community. Before I became the organizer there used to be nasty incidents where men beat their wives for attending political rallies but this behaviour is changing." (19<sup>th</sup> September 2016).*

Intrinsic motivation is something within the person that energizes his or her behaviour. Some of these innate motivators are interest, curiosity, and boldness. Without these attributes women cannot comfortably participate in politics. Dansoa 29, one of the four active women politicians had this to say:

*"As for me I have interest in politics and so I don't worry about what people think or say. I am bold to compete with the men and also engage them on all political matters. As a result they call me iron woman. This is because I always fight for my rights and I don't want anybody to cheat me or any woman". (19<sup>th</sup> September 2016).*

Asked if politics is attractive to women in the constituency all the women said no because the men have taken over almost everything and the women who are in it are the bold ones who are ready to take any insult or humiliation from society. A 41 year old Adisa, lamented:

*"I am a vibrant member of the ruling party but I am not appointed to any of the committees in the constituency. Even at the district level it is only two women against over thirty men who have been there as appointees all this while. How can this motivate other women to participate effectively in politic knowing that their efforts will not be recognized?"*

Frempomaa also noted:

*"There are not enough platforms for political discourse in this constituency to promote political education among the female population. The political parties have no institutional structures which support female participation in grassroots politics. Political parties do not also support women financially at the grassroots level to go into politics. In addition, the dominance of patriarchal structures at all levels of politics tends to make politics less attractive to women in the constituency."*

The views expressed by participants show that when women are appointed to various positions in the constituency and are supported both financially and morally by political parties, government and society, it will serve as motivation for them to participate in politics. On their part they identified boldness and interest as individual intrinsic motivating factors. This will then make politics attractive to women in the constituency.



Various people make use of different means, methods, and techniques to enable them engage effectively in various activities. Therefore the various motivational techniques which women in the Akan constituency use to enhance their grassroots political participations are discussed in relation to those expressed in relevant reviewed literature. The related literature revealed the two main motivational strategies people adopt to enable them participate or act in certain situation are internal (intrinsic) and external (extrinsic) motivation factors (Rudolph & Kleiner, 1989). Extrinsic motivation is related to 'tangible' rewards such as salary and fringe benefits, security, promotion, contract of service, the work environment and conditions of work. Such tangible rewards are often determined at the organizational level and may be largely outside the control of individual. While intrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is related to 'psychological' rewards such as the opportunity to use one's ability, a sense of challenge and achievement, receiving appreciation, positive recognition, and being treated in a caring and considerate, the psychological rewards are those that can usually be determined by the actions and behaviour of individual (Rudolph, & Kleiner, 1989). The human nature is being driven by both intrinsic and extrinsic desire. These desires help people to either be successful or fail in their field of endeavours. Politics as a field ought to provide some form of motivation for people who pursue it. Unfortunately, female politicians in Ghana are not seen, though the motivation may be available. The only political position women are found occupying is women organizer position. This is because politics is assumed to be a male dominating terrain and women who show interest are faced with a lot of barriers which affects their political participation to aspire to be in higher positions. There are indications of socio-economic, cultural and structural barriers in the Ghanaian society. It is in view of this that the study attempted to find out why women in politics are not motivated enough to take up various positions in politics.

The research findings revealed that most of the women in the constituency who were to some extent taking part in the grassroots politics were mainly motivated by intrinsic factors. These findings about the motivating factors are consistent with the views expressed by Mullins (2007). To Mullins, quality circles can rely too heavily on intrinsic motivation and the assumption that involvement and recognition are sufficient rewards in themselves. Mullins further asserted that, where the activity offers a high degree of intrinsic satisfaction or involves a variety of tasks, an element of problem-solving and the exercise of initiative, or where output is difficult to measure in quantitative terms, an informal, participative approach would seem to be more effective. It is more likely to lead to a higher level of team morale. Inferences drawn from the above assertions underpin the essence of women's level of grassroots politics in the study.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Demographic characteristics such as age and educational level of the participants were not a differentiator when it came to the participation of the women in grassroots politics. The results of this study indicated that a connection existed between willingness to participate in grassroots politics and supports systems leading to positive participation in grassroots politics.

Poor participation of women in grassroots politics exists in the Akan constituency. This poor participation were in the area of voting regularly on political issues in the community; attending town hall or community meetings on political issues in the constituency; contacting an assembly man, DCE, MP, or a political authority about an issue that was of importance to them and their community among others.

Majority of the women were motivated both by internal (intrinsic) and some external (extrinsic) factors to participate in grassroots politics in the Akan constituency. The intrinsic motivation took the form of, I think I have it within me to participate in grassroots politics; exercising my civic rights and women actively participating in politics encourages me to get involve; While the extrinsic motivation included - I will like to be called an 'honourable member'; recognition and prestige and securing a job with a political organization.

Majority of the respondents were mostly motivated intrinsically to participate in grassroots politics. It was indicated that women were motivated to participate in grassroots politics as this may help them learn the basics

of exercising their civic right when it comes to electoral processes.

With the recommendations, there is a clear consensus in literature and among respondents in this study that the electoral quota system is an effective tool for addressing the low women's political participation and representation. Therefore, the legislator by a constitutional provision, should be reserved 30% of the seats in the Parliament House, District Assemblies, public and political offices for women. Political parties should reserve 30% of all elective positions for women. The Ghana Electoral Commission (GEC) should ensure that this policy is implemented. Any political party that flouts this rule should be disqualified. This to an extent will uphold the Affirmative Action in the country and not as a mere voluntary action, but explicit specifications and clear guidelines for modalities and implementations that enhance women empowerment.

Again, the time has come for Ghanaians to see more women in politics as partners of development, helping to move the country forward. It is in the same vein that everybody is encouraged to put their hands on deck to encourage and promote the participation of women in higher decision making in the country. The task is enormous and daunting and it is through mutual cooperation between key actors, such as the government, NGOs, community leaders and authorities that the problems associated with a holistic form of empowerment could be overcome.

Lastly, political parties and government should put in place constitutional, structural and systemic changes that are women-friendly in the organizational set ups and operational mechanisms to give support to verbal, legal and documentary declarations. This will help boost the morale of women to participate in grassroots politics in the study areas.

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